NAQCC News

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1. APRIL SPRINT: It was last April we began our remarkable streak of 100+ logs sprints. Maybe this April we can start a streak of 125+ logs sprints or maybe even more. Remember the bands are much better now than they were last April. That should especially be true of 20 meters, but 40 should also be better. It's the time of year when thunderstorms start to get really fired up, so 80 may suffer from QRN, but don't forget to give it a try if 20 and 40 slow down for you.

So make your plans now to join in the fun this coming Tuesday evening local time (8:30 EDT, 7:30 CDT, 6:30 MDT, 5:30 PDT) which is Wednesday April 13 0030-0230Z 'radio time.' Every month we get many folks enter our sprints saying it's their first venture into any kind of ham radio contesting. Most wind up being regulars, and some go on to other sprints and contests as well. Our sprints are a great place to find out if contesting is for you, so how about giving it a try. Maybe like Mikey in the old Life cereal commercial, you'll find you like it. One thing is for sure, you'll never know till you do try, so do so and find out. You may open up a whole new world of enjoyment for yourself as many other members have. You don't have to be afraid of being overwhelmed by high speed CW and a frantic pace. Our sprints are slow speed and calm. Don't be afraid to ask someone to QRS (slow down) for you if needed. In virtually all cases, they will. We're especially grateful to the many great veteran contesters who regularly enter our sprints to help out the newcomers.

If you ARE thinking of entering one of our sprints for the first time, another thing to remember is that we have a nice certificate for the first-time log-submitting member with the best score.

We have also picked up again on our sprint prizes of WB8LZG's paddle handles and knobs thanks to another generous donation of the handsome hand-crafted items by Gregg. We deeply appreciate Gregg's generosity. They go to the winner of a random drawing among ALL participants except those who have won previously. Take a look at the Prize page in the main

section of the web site to see what they look like if you don't already know.

Remember to be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. MARCH CHALLENGE RESULTS: Slowly, but surely, our challenges are gaining in popularity. Each month we are getting submissions from first-time 'challengers.' The alphabet type challenges are particulary gaining in popularity. It was fun in March to try to do the challenge using only DX calls as the bands are definitely much better for DXing now with 17-10 meters open almost every day for DX from somewhere. But that doesn't mean by any means you need to do the challenges with DX stations. About the only restrictions as to who you work for a challenge is that you can't use the same station more than once in a month to get your letters, nor can you use any stations you work in contests or sprints. So far with a couple days left to report, we've gotten 15 members who participated in the March Time challenge. That's our third highest total for an alphabet challenge behind only November 2007 (Thanksgiving) with 17 and February 2009 (President's Wives) with 18. There's still till Sunday the 10th at 2400Z to report if you haven't done so.

As we've said before and will say for the last time in this newsletter, we believe the no-contest rule and having a set goal that is the same for everyone are two important reasons for the increase in popularity. Contest QSO's eliminated the 'challenge' aspect as it was k0NwT just too easy to master the challenge that way. No longer having challenges where you competed against other hams to see who did it the fastest, made the most of this or that, etc. turned them into true 'challenges' whereby you challenge yourself to accomplish this or that. You only compete against yourself that way, and it doesn't matter what others do.

Full Challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- With our aging membership, it all too often comes time when we must mention someone's passing. It's a very sad time when we have to do so. In many cases though, the one who passes is no longer suffering and is at peace. That gives us comfort.

We've told you about Fred Soper KC8FS and his lingering illnesses and suffering. He has finally mercifully been called home as Paul N8XMS told us in an email relayed from Fred's friend W8JFB, "Fred Soper, KC8FS, #2642, passed away on March 30th - his 63rd birthday. Condolences may be sent to Ms. Barbara Nichols, P.O. Box 94, Mosherville, MI 49258."

Fred was our Awards Manager who did an outstanding job of printing and mailing our certificates until ill health forced him to give up the position. We will always be grateful for the efforts he made for the club.

As with many hams, the only contact we have with them is via radio or nowadays via email. That is true of my (K3WWP) relationship with Fred. I never met him in person, nor talked to him on the phone, yet I feel we became good friends primarily via our email exchanges. Fred had a great sense of humor and would often forward some very funny emails to his friends.

One person who did have some telephone conversations with Fred is our club president Tom WY3H, and I'll turn it over to him for his comments on Fred's passing.

"It was always a pleasure speaking with Fred via landline, and as John said, Fred had a terrific sense of humor. Speaking with Fred always lightened my mood. He will be sadly missed in the ranks of the NAQCC."

We offer our condolences to all of Fred's surviving relatives and friends. Rest in peace, good friend.

- Unfortunately we lost another of our former club officers just a few days following Fred's passing. We received notice from Dennis N7HRO #2181 that Roy W5RJ passed away at 8:10 PM CDT on April 5th. Services for Roy are scheduled for Saturday the 9th mainly just for family. Dennis says condolences may be sent to: Family of Roy Jones, 408 W. Clark St., Butler, MO 64730-1106.

In case you missed it, we did a tribute to Roy in a previous newsletter. Here is an updated version of that tribute.

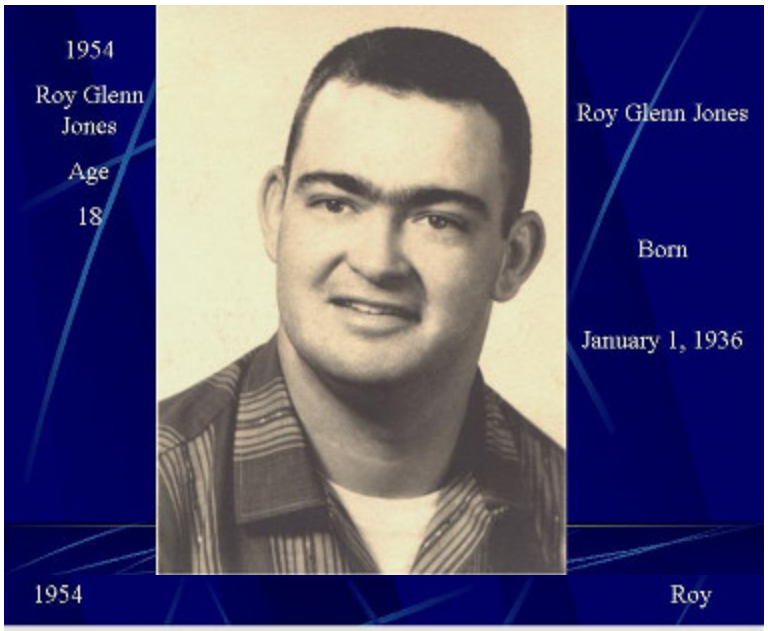
Roy joined the NAQCC very early on in the first month of our existence as #0212. When he moved to Butler, MO, he changed his call to KC0RJ, but re-considered and went back to W5RJ since that was more familiar to his many ham friends and he felt more comfortable with it. Not long after we started sending out our newsletters and newsletter notifications by email, he volunteered to help with the task taking a group of 500 members as his share. He was very conscientious in the job, doing it promptly and always keeping up to date with member updates for his group. Unfortunately the time came when his health worsened and he had to give up the position.

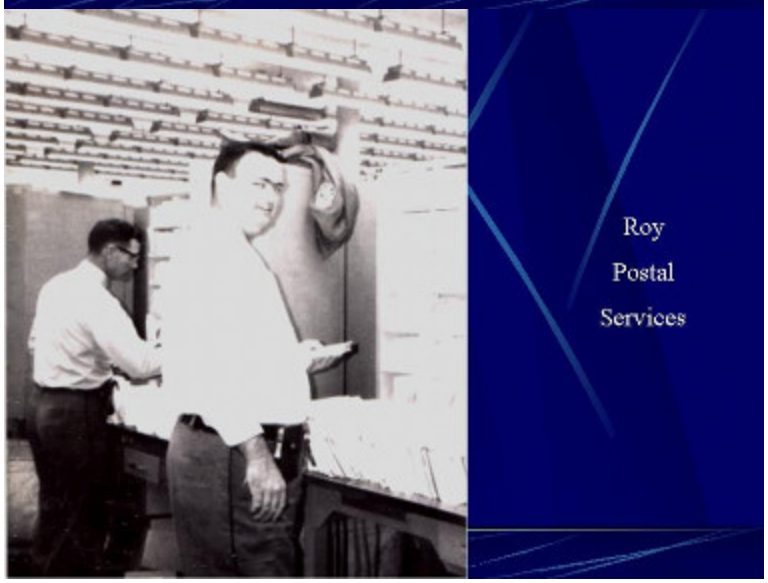
Dennis N7HRO #2181 knew Roy much better than I did as they were very close personal friends. So I yield to him now for more info on Roy.

"This is about Roy Jones W5RJ who is a member. We met as maintenance technicians going to school in Norman, OK. I think I first met Roy on the bus back in 1984 and we kept in touch ever since. Roy was living in Texas and I was in Tucson, AZ. After I moved to Las Vegas he and his wife visited my wife and I. I got to visit with them before she passed from cancer when my wife and I were in San Antonio for a Worlds Country/Western dance competition. After his wife passed he met his second wife Marion and they continued to visit us in Nevada. I spent the Christmas of 2005 with him after moving From NV to Torrington, Wyoming. We kept in touch on CQ100 and on the Breakfast Club, the Texas PON and the Eye Bank Net all on 80 meters. When I am traveling I often was able to contact him using the YL International Single Sideband System on 14.332.

Roy had to go under hospice care at home. As soon as his wife said he was under hospice care I dropped what I was doing and drove straight through from Wheatland, WY to Butler, MO. I moved his station to the living room bringing cables through the wall so he could either use his scooter to sit in front of the radios or his wife could bring them in front of his recliner. I did not have time to work in the snow to put up his vertical so he was restricted with an older inverted VEE using a tuner. Not the best antenna but at least he could listen. It really hurt seeing my old friend that way."

Dennis also provided several pictures of Roy at various points in his life. They were given to Dennis from Roy's son Lee. Here are just a few of them.





We offer our condolences to all of Roy's surviving relatives and friends. Rest in peace, good friend.

- Are you one of the 267 members whose picture we have hanging in our web site picture gallery? No? Why not? Running from the law? Ashamed of how you look? Overly shy? I'm absolutely sure none of those reasons apply, and I can't think of any other good reasons. So

come on and send us your picture for the gallery. I'd bet the majority of you own a digital camera and it would only take a couple minutes to get a good picture, and send it along via email to **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**. Just a couple guidelines to help us and to make it look the best. Since we only post head shots in the gallery, the head portion of the picture or the picture itself should be at least 120 x 120 pixels in size. If that's too technical, figure the head portion should be at least 1/5 or so of the total picture area of a typical digital photo. Just be sure it is not too small. Larger pictures downsize nicely, but smaller pictures don't have enough pixels to enlarge and still look good. I think a picture with you looking directly at the camera is best, but that's up to you. If you have a classic profile and want to show it off, that's fine too. BE SURE to include your call and NAQCC # in the email so we don't have to look you up, or have to email and ask you for the info. If possible, but by no means required, name the picture file as "pix_sm_(your call letters).jpg" without the quotes and parentheses like pix_sm_k3wwp.jpg if it were my picture. No digital camera? Send a regular picture via regular mail, and we'll convert it to digital.

We just want you there because it adds so much to a QSO when you know what the person you are working looks like, and the great pictures in our gallery are a good way to do that.

- In addition to pictures, we need input from members in other areas as well. Let's talk about a couple here. I can't believe that with over 5,400 members and mentioning it in the past few newsletters that no one has suggested a new poll question. Surely some one out there must have an idea. As long as it pertains in some way to the club or CW or QRP, there's only one other restriction for now. It must be a question that has single answers, not multiple ones. For example, "What is your favorite band?", NOT "On which bands do you operate?". So think about it. If we don't get any questions, I guess we'll just discontinue the poll feature of the web site at the end of this month. There seems to be interest in the poll feature as the current poll about age has gotten 272 votes so far.

I see from Matt's item below on our NAQCC EU Chapter that their newsletter is drawing some feature articles from our EU members. We have many more stateside members than EU members, and I'm sure a lot of you out there have material that would be of interest to most if not all club members. Why not write about it and submit it to our Member News Editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. If you're unsure about your grammar or formatting, don't worry. Paul and/or I will fix it up if you think it needs it. Some suggestions are construction articles, stories about the history of CW/QRP, explanation of different forms of propagation, history of straight keys, bugs, keyers..... The list is endless as long as it pertains to CW and/or QRP.

- It's not too early to start thinking about our 7th anniversary celebration in October. Just before this issue "went to press", Tom informed me that he has signed up for and was granted the use of special event calls N1A, N2A, N3A, N4A, N5A, N6A, N7A, N8A, N9A, and N0A for the week of Monday October 10 through Sunday October 16. He has also sent the publicity to the ARRL for our anniversary event. So now all we need to do is sign up folks to operate the calls and wait for that week to arrive. A lot of you have had fun in the past by helping us out as one of the operators of our special event calls. We hope you'll be back again this year. Also we hope many of our newer members will sign up as an op this year.

The guidelines are very simple. All you do is operate normally, but use the special event call instead of your own. Period. Put in whatever amount of time you can from 1 hour up to the full 168 hours, although I wouldn't advise that. HI The human body does need its rest. Each of the ten call areas from W1 through W0 has its own special event call as noted above. The operators in a call area co-ordinate their on-air times among themselves.

Sound interesting? Contact us via email at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and let us know. No need to make a FIRM commitment now and should something come up between now and then,

you can easily cancel if necessary. We just need to know as early as possible so we can actively recruit ops if a call area doesn't have enough. Ideally a group of about 4-6 ops from each area seems to work out well from our past experiences. Fewer than that sets up too many times when we don't have any activity, and more than that makes for confusion in scheduling. Having said that, it's much better to have too many than too few ops, so don't let the fear of overloading your call area be a factor in preventing you from signing up. We can work it all out no matter how many we have.

- Morse Code to become immortal! Yes, it looks like Morse code is going to live until Earth finally comes to an end, or actually until the Moon comes to an end. Take a look at this picture (courtesy of NASA/JPL), then click it to read the explanation.

Thanks to my friend Jim KC7ZMV for pointing me to the article. Hey Jim, how about becoming a NAQCC member?

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (April 30) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club.

3a. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have three chapters - European, Minnesota, and Texas. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the

guidelines.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ymy
(13K)

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

Since the last chapter report in the late December issue of the newsletter, the European Chapter has been making a lot of progress.

Our March Sprint was one of the most successful yet. Thirteen logs were submitted from all over Europe and even one from North America. We saw the milestone of our first two transatlantic QSOs, between Baltasar EA8BVP in Europe, and both Ron WX4RM and Will K9FO in the USA. This, together with many, many European QSOs really demonstrates the power of CW/QRP. First place was awarded to Fred, HB9DAX with 496 points, joint second place to Victor EV6DX and Allan OZ8A, both with a score of 216 and third place to Valery, RW3AI, with 198 points. Full results are available on the website (see link above)

Our next sprint is to be held on Wednesday, 13th April at 1800Z. Please join us to help continue our success.

The European Chapter newsletter, sent to all NAQCC members in Europe, is also growing. Monthly features now include a homebrewing article by Bill, G4KKI and a history of the key by Ray, G0EML, in addition to such items as our sprint and member news.

Until next time, 73 es gd dx!

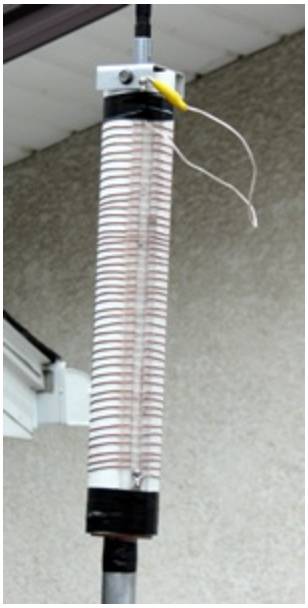
NAQCC MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from Chapter President Rich WD0K (L) and/or Keith K0HJC (R) unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to pix_email_wd0k .

Greetings from the Minnesota Chapter! KD0V's code classes will finish for the spring on March 31st. We will have to wait until September for more news about Henderson and Ogilvy from "War of the Worlds", and the on-air contacts from Merlin's garage.

K9OSC, WD0K and K0HJC got together for brunch at The Depot in Faribault, Minnesota on March 29th. That's Rich, WD0K, with the hair, and Keith, K0HJC with the sharp-looking hat. K9OSC took the image.

K9OSC finished his home-brew portable vertical. It is operational on 40, 30 and 20 meters, using a Hamstick with a hand-wound coil. Pretty neat.



Our next brunch is Friday, April 15th in Apple Valley. Our sideband rag-chew is at 1500 GMT on 3.707 Mhz.

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

The East Texas QRS Net (ETN) is meeting each Monday evening at 1900 CDST (2400 UTC) on 3564.5 KHz. T-storm QRN is beginning to occur as is normal for this time of year, but for now the ETN will stay on 80m. The net will QSY up a bit for QRM.

The ETN is open to all hams regardless of QTH, so check in for a little CW practice or to show your support for the net. The Net Control Station (NCS) is Allen, KA5TJS. He will reply to you at the speed you call him, so don't be put off by stations sending faster than you can comfortably

receive. You will be among friends, so give it a try!

We are still seeking volunteers to "Elmer" local hams and prospective hams. Please send us your interests and contact information. Until next time, start thinking about operating QRP CW in the great outdoors! You can find the NAQCC Texas Chapter website at http://www.naqcctx.com/.

4. NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT:

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Ron K5DUZ (L) unless otherwise credited.
If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

I am continuing to receive interesting and thought provoking e-mails from our NAQCC members. Thank you for the feedback! Writing this column is made easier by our members asking questions or for additional information. I also appreciate the constructive suggestions I've received. Please continue to let me know if you are having problems with any aspect of learning CW or improving your speed and I'll try my best to help you.

Now back to our discussion of learning and becoming proficient with Morse/CW..

I received a question about "copying behind" so I want to further expand on the reason for learning to do this. So many of us have learned to record each character as received with our trusty pencil. One reason this is not good practice is that it impedes learning to copy words, which becomes more necessary as the word speed is increased. By breaking this character by character recording habit and learning to copy "in our heads" we free ourselves to learn to copy words as word sounds. Anyone that can copy 15 wpm or greater has probably observed that some frequently used words, Q signals and CW abbreviations are being recognized as complete words rather than a sequence of characters.

We can practice copying words as "word sounds" by using a CW practice program that sends commonly used words in a random manner. If your program doesn't have this feature you can make a text file of the words that you want to practice receiving. When we were training our subconscious minds to recognize character sounds we listened to characters sent in random order to prevent our minds from "guessing" the next character. Now that we are practicing word copying our mind is free to "guess away", and guess it will!

During casual QSOs we "copy in our heads" and record only the pertinent information such as call sign, RST, name, QTH, etc., but now that we are beginning to copy words we record the information after receiving the complete word. So by waiting until we've heard and recognized the entire word before recording it we've become much more efficient at receiving. Note that we "hear word #1", then record "word #1" while receiving "word #2", etc. So we have made the receiving and recording processes loosely coupled. In fact, because some words are long and others short, several short words can be received while recording a long word. These long/short word sequences force us to even more completely disassociate the receiving and recording tasks. As with most things in life, "practice makes perfect" so have faith that you too can master copying behind.

Once you have begun to master copying words and copying behind during casual QSOs, you

can try your hand at copying messages on a traffic net or copying W1AW code practice sessions. You will quickly note that you will need to expand your inventory of word sounds. Just add words to your practice file as you discover them.

Until next time, HPE CU SN ON CW! Ron, K5DUZ

4a. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Brian WB9TPA unless otherwise credited.
Brian will handle all Net related material at this email address:
pix email wb9tpa (1K)

Now our NAQCC QRS Nets schedule and activity report:

NAQCC QRS Net

Sunday evenings local time which is Monday 0000Z on 3562.5 kHz.

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Date(UTC)   NCS         Participants
03/21/11  VE3FAL   4 - VE3FAL K0HJC WA2JSG N8IUP
03/28/11  WB9TPA  14 - WB9TPA N9RLO WA4IQL AC8AP K3WWP WM4X N4JD WA1LWS
                       K1IEE N8IUP WN8Y N8MFN K3VIG KU4GW
04/04/11  WB9TPA   6 - WB9TPA K2HT N8IUP K1IEE WB0QQT KC8ZTJ
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NAQCC ET QRS Net (East Texas)

Monday evenings local time which is Tuesday 0000Z on 3564.5 kHz.

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Date(UTC)   NCS         Participants
03/29/11  KE5YGA   4 - KE5YGA K2HT KE5YUM KE9DR
04/05/11  KA5TJS   4 - KA5TJS KE5YUM K5OAI W5IQS
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NAQCC PNW QRS Net (Pacific NorthWest)

Wednesday evenings local time which is Thursday 0200Z on 3575 kHz.

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Date(UTC)   NCS         Participants
04/01/11  KE7LKW   4 - KE7LKW N6KIX NX1P K7ALG
04/08/11  KE7LKW   5 - KE7LKW K7ALG N6KIX K7ZNP N6GND
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NAQCC EC QRS Net (East Coast)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0130Z on 3565 kHz.

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Date(UTC)   NCS         Participants
04/08/11  WA2JSG   4 - WA2JSG KU4GW KB3ENU WB9TPA
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All frequencies are +/- QRM.

For more net info, see CW Assistance/QRS Nets on the web site.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT NAQCC #2062. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon has appeared in each of our even-numbered newsletters ever since their debut in Issue #058, November 17, 2007.

HAM QUIPS
"Key To The City"
MAYORS "KEY" TO THE CITY
HAM RADIO AWARDS
© 8-19-2005 Dick Sylvan "W9CBT"
I'd Like To Present You With This "Key" To The City

6. NAQCC MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Paul McAfee KI6OCB #4546

At 58 years of age I rediscovered, remembering my scout days, the Morse code. I was "re-learning" it as a "brain exercise" and that led to the discovery that two of the pipers in our pipe-band, The Black Bear Pipe Band, were licensed hams. On a trip to Green Valley, AZ, to play for the Marine Corps League Birthday Ball, (yep, former Marine here) I was introduced to their dad, also a former Marine, also a ham, who got me Gordon West's Technician book. Within three months I was a Technician, on my way to Extra several months later.

My wife, BillieJo, KI6ZHM, and I are members of the ARRL, Tahoe Amateur Radio Association (TARA), and Sierra Intermountain Emergency Radio Association (SIERA). I am also a member of FISTS #13659, SKCC, Reno QRP, and, of course, NAQCC #4546.

As an "ol' farm boy" and mechanic, mostly snowplows and equipment, I've always enjoyed tinkering and ham radio, QRP in particular, have opened up a new world of tools and tinkering to me! I smilingly tell electronically oriented folk I meet that I didn't know they made wrenches smaller than 3/4" till I got my ticket.

We live in a valley bordered east and west by 1500' of granite south of Lake Tahoe, CA, and at times, and even with good conditions, it's a challenge to get a signal into, or out of, our "Little Siberia". But the Amateur Radio spirit lives, and the rewards of QSOs made are indeed

worthwhile.

My QRO rig is a Kenwood TS-850s, and my QRP rigs include kits I've assembled, an Elecraft KX-1, an OHR100a, a Norcal 40a. They're hooked up to a simple wire dipole through the trees at about 35'.

Projects and rigs in our vehicles, on my bench, floor, and in the closet, include an Atlas 210x, Viking Navigator, Hammarlund HQ-100, some VHF Radio Direction Finding gear and, of course the Kenwood HTs and D700 mobile rigs. There are various keys and bugs that turn up from time to time and find a safe new home out of the cold and away from bears, raccoons, and coyotes.

Favorite key? Well, I like history and old equipment, so, although I like my Blue Racer, "Birthday" Bug, Bencher keyers, and Junkers Navy key, I enjoy having my ol', venerable, J-38 straight key to hand.

My most memorable, and first, QRP contact was made with my OHR100a (40M) while doing the alignment. One-and-a-half watts to Oregon out of our valley, very exciting. It wasn't a long contact due to conditions, but a happy surprise, and a great way to finish the kit.

When the snow melts this year I'm hoping to get up to some of these ridges and hilltops and get a few more QSOs completed. I'm planning to add some more QRP contacts to my log.

My favorite motto, after "Semper Fidelis", of course, is "Power is not a Substitute for Skill."

I'd like to close by sending a big "Thank-you!" to everyone who supports and encourages new hams like me, we appreciate it!

72 de
Paul McAfee, KI6OCB

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is April 28. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From Richard KD0NZX #5462 -** John, Thank you for the fine welcome and a big thanks to Rick Lloyd for sending the NAQCC membership certificate. I put the certificate on the wall of my radio shack, a road-weary Airstream travel trailer that's resting out on the back forty where I've got about ten acres and all summer to learn how to copy code and build antennas. I'm studying for the General out there by day, with choirs of red wing blackbirds and warblers tuning up for the season. (We're all hanging around this weekend, tapping our feet and shaking our feathers, impatiently waiting for the remaining snowdrifts to melt).

My CW study thus far has upped my respect for the craft by at least 100%. I've just fished my first two characters out of a stream of Morse and I feel more accomplished than I did when I

hooked my first brown trout. It is going to take me some time to learn to copy, but every session increases my love for the mode.

I don't have a transceiver yet. A neighbor ham loaned me a paddle and keyer and a Grundig 750 receiver, which to my novice sensibilities is plenty of gear until I can identify and send intelligible signals. I'm a little uneasy having a paddle and keyer in the loop just now - feel like I ought to start on a straight key or something more my size.

I'm really not interested in the phone bands (I spent thirty years digging messages out of bad VHF while wearing uncomfortable headsets as an instrument pilot). Besides, I don't have anything to say that requires 100 watts anymore, probably never did.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** It will soon be one full year that I have made at least one QSO every day with milliwatt power (930mW). It has not been quite as easy making a daily 930mW QSO as it has been making one with 5 watts which I've done now for over 6,000 consecutive days. However it is not really all that much harder on the vast majority of the days. It's more rewarding as well, especially when working DX. If you have the capability to run powers less than 1 watt, I encourage you to give it a try. Many of you know my antenna situation (simple wires mostly in my attic) and my location (in the middle of a town in a river valley). If I can do it under those conditions, think how much easier it would be with bigger outdoor antennas on a hilltop. But if you don't have those luxuries, remember my situation and give it a try anyway. You'll be thrilled when making those QSO's with a lot less power than it takes to burn a little night light. Have fun, and put it right at the top of your to-do list to report your results here in the Member News section of our newsletter. Let the ham radio world know how efficient and still extremely useful CW is.

If you're interested and want more info on mW DX and other QRP/CW matters, check my web site here.

- **From Dick K2HT #3727 -** 10-Meter Half Square Antenna -- The annual highlight for our small amateur radio club is Field Day. Our club works very hard to get as many bonus points as possible to enhance our field day enjoyment. With limited club funds our educational activity has to be inexpensive yet informative.

The club decided to build a 10-meter Half Square Antenna and learn to use a Antenna SWR Analyzer for our educational activity bonus. We are very fortunate that our club President, KD0ZZ, owns a SWR analyzer and is alway happy to assist other ham operators with their antenna projects. We started out with 38 feet of 14ga solid copper wire from our junk box. Other types of copper wire should work just fine. We found several different formulas for the horizontal section of the half square, ranging from 468/f Mhz to 502.5/f Mhz. We decided to use 17 feet for our horizontal wire. For each of the verical legs which hang down, we used the formula 250/28.3 Mhz (8 feet, 10 inches), plus an extra 6 inches of wire on each vertical leg for antenna pruning.

We connected the center of the coax to the horizontal wire and the coax shield to the vertical leg. The SWR Antenna Analyzer was connected and the initial reading for low swr was at 26.9 Mhz and 49 ohms. We carefully cut a few inches off the verical legs (we cut the same amount off of each leg). After some trial and error pruning, we obtained the following SWR readings: 1.2 at 28.3 Mhz, 1.5 at 28.0 Mhz, and 1.7 at 28.7 Mhz. We ran the coax approximately nine feet horizontially from the antenna before we brought it down to the transmitter.

The ten meter band opened for a short time during field day and several contacts were made by our GOTA station and field day station. If you are interested in building a wire antenna with some gain, try the Half Square Antenna.

Listen for KC0YNE, our club call, when we will be using this antenna again on ten meters during the upcoming field day.

- **From Paul N8XMS #0675 -** I received several comments about the member spotlight in our last newsletter. Here is an example (name withheld to protect the guilty!): "You sure got April Fools on me! I had already typed you an email asking if you were sure you got Tom's call right because I couldn't find KA4FUN in any of the callsign databases and I was about to hit send when I went back to the newsletter and noticed the link at the bottom! LOL! You joker!".

In the mean time, Tom and I are continuing to experiment with his unique QRPp rig. We have now modified the circuit board so that it fits inside of a fake cigar for stealth operations. Unfortunately most of the public areas around here are non-smoking and Tom has been asked more than once to extinguish the rig right in the middle of a QSO.

- **From Jerry VE5DC #3690 -** Note: Jerry sent this to me (K3WWP), and I thought it would be of interest to all members.
"Hi John: I thought you might be interested in hearing about a very low power CW beacon. It is run by K6FRC on a frequency of 13.565 Mhz on Part 15 'HiFer' license free rules. The power output is 1 mw and I can often hear it here (DO80) when conditions are right but I have to use a 20 meter beam to pull him in. The antenna he uses is a Hamstick Vertical. Paul has several other beacons and you can read about them at http://www.k6frc.com. 72/73"

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.